



Austro-Hungarian
Orders, Medals and Decorations
Volume III: Decorations
Part I



by
Richard R. Lussier, Dr. P. H.





Table of Contents

Volume III Decorations, Part I

Introduction.....	4
Order of Precedence.....	5
Military Merit Cross (1849-1860).....	8
Military Merit Cross (1860-1914).....	14
Military Merit Cross (1914-1918).....	25

Volume III Decorations, Part II

Red Cross Decorations (1914-1923).....	69
Red Cross Medals (1914-1923).....	96
Bravery Medal (1849-1859).....	109
Bravery Medal (1859-1866).....	114
Bravery Medal (1866-1915).....	118
Bravery Medal (1915-1917).....	122
Bravery Medal (1917-1922).....	132
Officers Bravery Medal (1917-1922).....	143

Volume III Decorations, Part III

Ecclesiastic Merit Cross (1801-1918).....	153
Bronze Military Merit Medal (1890-1911).....	167
Military Merit Medal (1911-1917).....	173
Grand Military Merit Medal (1916-1917).....	187
Military Merit Medal (1917-1920).....	196
Grand Military Merit Medal (1917-1920).....	203
Civil Medal of Merit (1848-1849).....	210
Merit Cross (1850-1922).....	212
War Cross for Civil Merit (1916-1918).....	254
Iron Merit Cross (1916-1922).....	274
Karl Troop Cross (1916-1920).....	288
Forty Year Faithful Service Decoration (1898).....	295





Table of Contents

Volume III Decorations, Part IV

Officers Military Service Decoration, Second Class (1849-1890)).....	305
Officers Military Service Decoration, First Class (1890-1918).....	308
Officers Military Service Decoration, Second Class (1890-1918)	317
Officers Military Service Decoration, First Class (1849-1890, Third Class (1890-1918)	323
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, First Class (1849-1867)...	331
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, Second Class (1849-1867).	333
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, First Class (1867-1890), Second class (1890-1913).....	335
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, First Class (1867-1869), Second class (1890-1913).....	336
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, Second Class (1867-1869),	338
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, Third Class (1867-1869), Second Class (1869-1890) and First Class (1890-1913).....	340
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, Third Class (1867-1869), Second Class (1869-1890) and First Class (1890-1913)	341
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, First Class (1913-1918)...	343
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, Second Class (1913-1918)	345
Non-Commissioned Officers & Troops Military Service Decoration, Third Class (1913-1918)...	347
Wound Medal (1917-1922).....	350
Home Guard 25 Year Service Medal (1908-1918).....	356
Home Guard 40 Year Service Medal (1908-1918).....	359





Introduction

This volume contains a description and analysis of the decorations issued within the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1848 until the end of WWI. This section will include all decorations issued by the Austro-Hungarian government from 1848 until the fall of the empire and selected awards issued after the fall of the empire if they were specifically issued to reward service during the imperial period and if they are directly related to the military mission of the government. The material covered in this volume will include decorations for bravery, merit and service.





Order of Precedence of Austrian Decorations

Decorations are in bold

1. Order of the Golden Fleece
2. Military Maria Theresia Order, Grand Cross
3. Royal Hungarian Order of St Stephan, Grand Cross
4. **Military Merit Cross, First Class**
5. Order of Leopold, Grand Cross
6. Order of Leopold, First Class
7. Order of the Iron Crown, First Class
8. Order of Franz Joseph, Grand Cross
9. Military Maria Theresia Order, Commander
10. Royal Hungarian Order of St Stephan, Commander
11. **Military Merit Cross, Second Class**
12. Order of Leopold, Commander
13. Order of the Iron Crown, Second Class
14. Order of Franz Joseph, Commander
15. Military Maria Theresia Order, Knight
16. All Kleine Decorations
17. Franz Joseph Commemoration Cross, First Class
18. Royal Hungarian Order of St Stephan, Knight
19. Order of Leopold, Knight
20. **Red Cross Service Star**
21. Order of Franz Joseph, Officer
22. Order of the Iron Crown, Third Class
23. Order of Franz Joseph, Knight
24. **Officers Bravery Medal in Gold**
25. **Officers Bravery Medal in Silver**
26. **Military Merit Cross, Third Class**
27. **Red Cross Decoration, First Class**
28. **Ecclesiastical Cross, First Class**
29. Decoration of the Elizabeth Theresia Military Foundation
30. Honor Insignia for Archduke Albrecht
31. Honor Insignia for Arts and Sciences
32. **Ecclesiastical Cross, Second Class**
33. **Great Military Merit Medal**
34. **Silver Military Merit Medal**
35. **Bronze Military Merit Medal**





Introduction



Order of Precedence of Austrian Decorations (Continued)

36. **Bravery Medal in Gold**
37. **Gold Merit Cross with Crown**
38. **War Cross for Civil Merit, First Class**
39. **Franz Joseph Commemoration Cross, Second Class**
40. **Red Cross Decoration, Officers Cross**
41. **Gold Merit Cross**
42. **Silver Bravery Medal, First Class**
43. **Silver Bravery Medal, Second Class**
44. **Bronze Bravery Medal**
45. **Elizabeth Medal**
46. **Silver Merit Cross with Crown**
47. **Silver Merit Cross**
48. **Iron Merit Cross with Crown**
49. **Iron Merit Cross**
50. **1873 War Medal**
51. **War Cross for Civil Merit, Second Class**
52. **Schleswig-Holstein Campaign Medal for 1864**
53. **Tyrol Defense Medal of 1848**
54. **Tyrol Defense Medal of 1859**
55. **Tyrol Defense Medal of 1866**
56. **Karl Troop Cross**
57. **War Cross for Civil Merit, Third Class**
58. **Military Service Decoration for Officers, First Class, (50 Years)**
59. **Forty Year Faithful Service Medal**
60. **Military Service Decoration, Second Class for Officers, (35 Years)**
61. **Military Service Decoration, Third Class for Officers, (25 Years)**
62. **Franz Joseph Cross third class**
63. **Red Cross Decoration, Second Class**
64. **Military Service Decoration, First Class for enlisted personnel**
65. **Military Service Decoration, Second Class for enlisted personnel**
66. **Military Service Decoration, Third Class for enlisted personnel**
67. **1908 Landsturm Medal**
68. **War Cross for Civil Merit, Fourth Class**
69. **Red Cross Silver Honor Medal**
70. **1898 Jubilee Medal for Household Personnel**





Introduction



Order of Precedence of Austrian Decorations (Continued)

71. 1898 Jubilee Medal for Armed Forces
72. 1898 Jubilee Medal for Civil Service
73. 1908 Jubilee Cross
74. **Kaiser Franz Joseph Cross**
75. Bosnia Herzegovina Commemoration Medal
76. 1912/13 Mobilization Cross
77. 1892-93 Sea Voyage Medal
78. **Wound Medal**
79. **Red Cross Bronze Honor Medal**
80. **Home Guard Forty Year Long Service Medal**
81. **Home Guard Twenty Five Year Long Service Medal**
82. Life Saving and Fire Fighting Medal
83. Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knight of Honor
84. German Knights Order, Knight of Honor
85. Honor Insignia of the Knights of the Golden Spur
86. German Knights Order, Marian Commander Cross
87. Order of St John of Jerusalem, Donates Cross
88. German Knights Order, Marian Cross
89. Tyrolean Matriculation Badge





Decorations

Military Merit Cross, First Issue, 1849-1860 (Militärverdienstkreuz)



Image attributed to Reference Catalogue Orders, medals and decorations of the World, A-D, Borna Barac

Date Issued: October 24, 1849-January 12, 1860

Reason Issued: To recognize officers of the Austrian armed forces who have accomplished especially meritorious services during time of war by high intelligence, courage and resoluteness, or in time of piece, by outstanding zeal.

Classes or Types: This decoration was issued in one class

Interesting Facts: This cross was originally proposed by Field Marshall Josef Count Radetzky as an award for the officers who served with him at Custoza and Novara in 1848 and 1849.

- This award was originally created to reward officers who had performed heroically in suppressing the revolution of 1848/49 or who had been personally commended by Feldmarschall Radetzky for their conduct during the revolution.
- All officers who had participated in the campaigns of 1848/49 were awarded this decoration
- This decoration was not awarded for any service after 1849 until after the death of Radetzky in 1857.
- This decoration could only be conferred on officers
- The decoration was worn on the left side of the chest with the ribbon suspended from the first button hole.
- Prior to 1874 the crosses were to be returned to the War Ministry and later to the Privy Treasurer upon the death of the recipient. After 1874 the recipient's family was allowed to keep the decoration.
- Recipients were allowed to add "recipient of the MVK" to their names
- Some Notable recipients were: Feldmarschall Radetzky, Feldmarschall Archduke Albrecht, General of Cavalry Johann Freiherr von Appel, General of Cavalry Ludwig Prinz zu Windischgratz and Ludwig Ritter von Benedek
- This cross design was considered to be so attractive that it was the inspiration for the design of later awards

Hallmarks: This decoration was not officially hallmarked until after 1872. However they are sometimes marked with a maker's mark.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross, First Issue, 1849-1860 (Militärverdienstkreuz)

Images courtesy of Dorotheum



Design: A clawed cross with slightly curved and tapered arms which is suspended from a flat ornamental eye through which passes a 15 mm oval grooved ring which is 1.5 mm wide

Obverse: A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat suspension eye which has a suspension ring passing through it. The ring is grooved in the center. The arms of the cross have a 2 mm-garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a fine silver line and inside the line is a depression, which has a granulated finish. The 12 to 13 mm center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is a fine silver line and granulated silver center medallion. On the center medallion, in two lines, is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit). Below the inscription is a broken French rule ornament composed of two lines with a dot in the middle.

Reverse: Plain silver for the official issued crosses and white enamel for privately made examples after 1855.

Weight: 11 grams

Size: The cross is 30 mm in diameter. The arms of the cross are 15 mm in width at the end. The center medallion is 13 mm in diameter.

Type of Material: Silver and enamel

Variations:

Type I: A cross as described above.

Type II: A cross as described above except the reverse is in white enamel. These crosses were privately produced and not government issue

Type III: As described above except the cross has an inscription on the back. These are presentation pieces. The inscriptions are privately added.

Designer: Unknown.

Manufacturer:

- Christian Friedrich Rothe
 - Rothe and Neffe
 - Alexander E. Kochert





Decorations

Military Merit Cross, First Issue, 1849-1860 (Militärverdienstkreuz)



Number Issued: 2,382 awards of this cross were issued between 1848 and 1859. 2,334 were issued for combat and services which were recognized with the addition of the war decoration in the form of a wreath added retroactively to the decoration after 1860. 45 crosses were issued for non-combatant service and thus did not qualify in 1860 for the addition of the war decoration. Three awards were made to foreigners.

1849 = 1,002 crosses issued (all received the war decoration in 1860)

1850 = 454 crosses issued (all received the war decoration in 1860)

1851 = 35 crosses issued (15 with war decoration after 1860)

1852 = 14 crosses issued (11 with war decoration after 1860)

1853 = 3 crosses issued (2 with war decoration after 1860)

1854 = 1 cross was issued with war decoration

1855 = None

1856 = 1 cross was issued with war decoration

1857 = 1 cross was issued with war decoration

1858 = 1 cross was issued with war decoration

1859 = 862 crosses were issued 841 with war decoration added in 1860. (14 of these crosses were issued posthumously, one retroactively and 3 to foreigners). This is the point in time when crosses could be issued for services rendered after 1849 and it was also a result of the Austro-Sardinian War. Thus the large number of crosses issued in this year. (Note that although not authorized by statute, from this time crosses were occasionally awarded to foreigners).

Order of Precedence: When established it was the highest ranking award other than an order. Not listed in the 1918 Order of Precedence

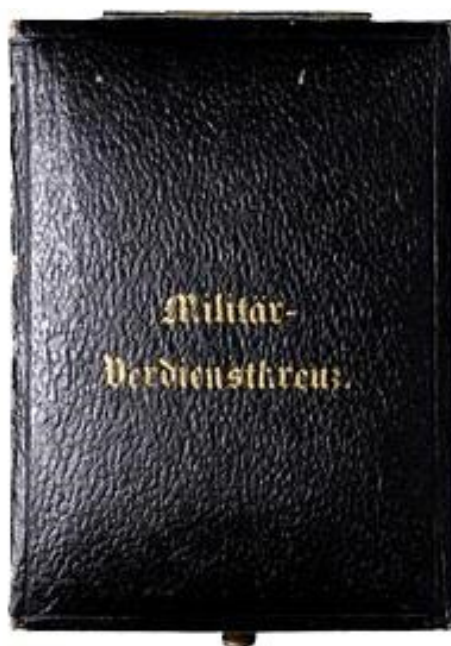
Case: Black simulated leather or leather with gold trim and a gold inscription: **Militär Verdienstkreuz**. Translation: Military Merit Cross. The inner part of the bottom is black velvet and fitted. The inside of the lid is yellow silk and has the Rothe logo

- A black leather case with **Militär Verdienstkreuz** on the lid in gold





Decorations
Military Merit Cross,
First Issue, 1849-1860 (Militärverdienstkreuz)



Case Continued: A brown simulated leather case with an embossed design on the edges. The inner bottom is fitted and lined with fawn colored velvet. This type case is known to have been used by Rothe.

Ribbon: A 38 to 42 mm wide (originally dark Rose-red) Ponceau-red (Poppy-red) and white laddered war ribbon worn as straight ribbon and as a tri-fold ribbon. The laddered center portion of the ribbon is 20 mm in width, with 5 mm wide red margins and a white edge. The straight ribbon was worn suspended from a button hole and the tri-fold ribbon on the left side of the chest.

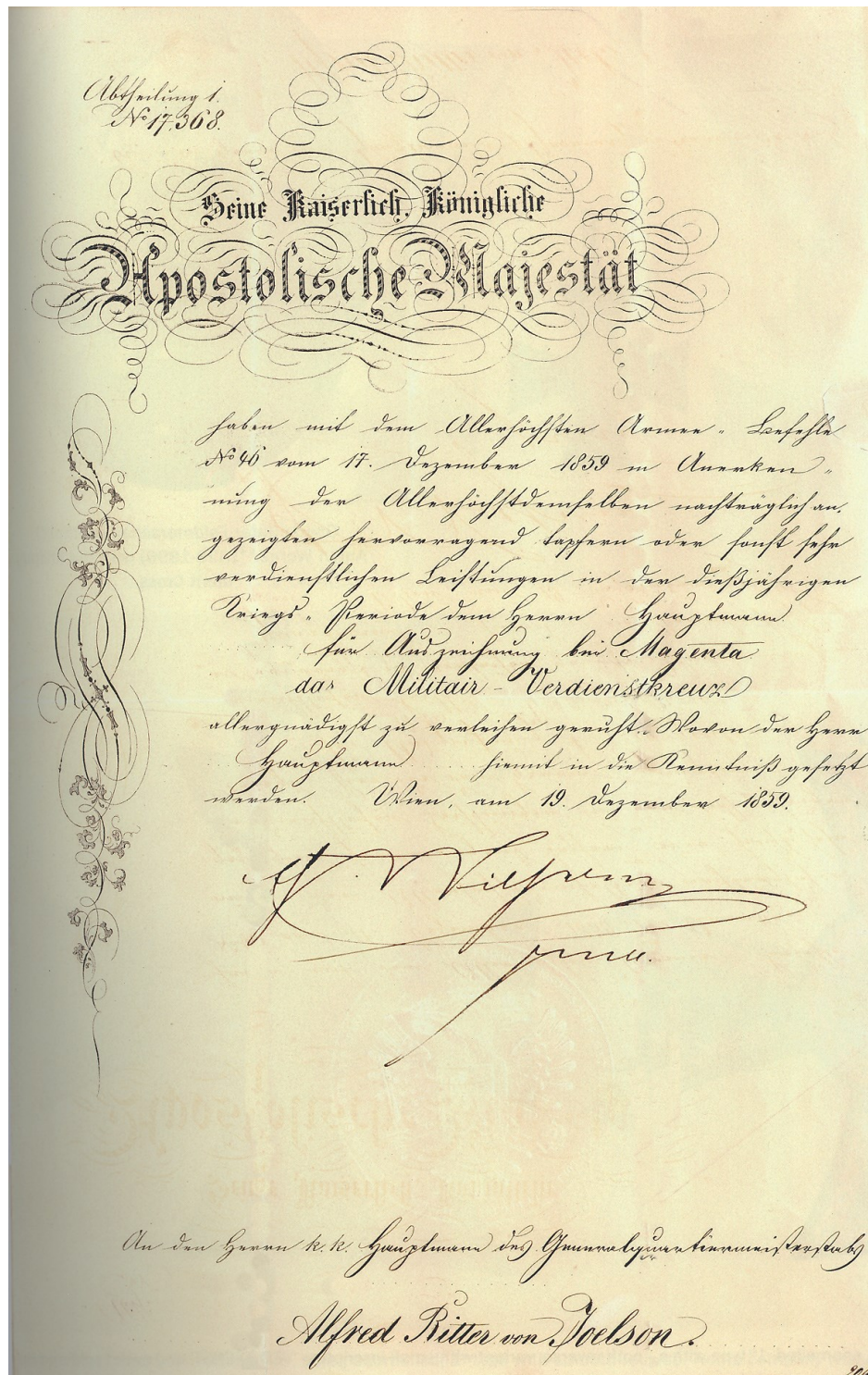
Attachments: None

Miniature: Miniatures of this award exist





Decorations
Military Merit Cross,
First Issue, 1849-1860
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



An 1859 Military Merit Cross Award Document





Decorations
Military Merit Cross,
First Issue, 1849-1860
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Vincenz Freiherr von Augustin wearing the Military Merit Cross





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Second Issue, 1860-1914

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Date Issued: Military Merit Cross, January 12, 1860-September 23, 1914; Military Merit Cross with war decoration, January 12, 1918

Reason Issued: To recognize officers of the Austrian armed forces who have accomplished especially meritorious services during time of war by high intelligence, courage and resoluteness, or in time of peace, by outstanding zeal.

Classes or Types: This decoration was issued in one class with and without war decoration. The addition of the war decoration was authorized on March 23, 1860

Interesting Facts: This cross was originally proposed by Field Marshall Josef Count Radetzky as an award for the officers who served with him at Custozza and Novara in 1848 and 1849. After 1860 it was awarded for merit in battle and for long and meritorious service in peace time. Most officers received the award after 20 years of service and after attaining the rank of Major. This varied however depending on the status of the recipient and the nature of their service with some receiving the award after only 15 years of service.

- The enamel in this issue is a darker shade of red than the 1860 crosses and lighter than in those issued after 1914
- The crosses are thinner and the wreath is flatter and less well defined than those issued after 1914
- Jeweled examples of this decoration were issued but are not a higher award rather they were purchased and presented by Emperor Franz Joseph as a personal sign of his appreciation for the services rendered by the recipient
- There were only eight Austro-Hungarian awards authorized by statute to be issued in a jeweled version: The Order of the Golden Fleece, The Military Order of Maria Theresia, The Order of St. Stephan, the Order of Leopold, The Austrian Imperial Order of the Iron Crown, (although the statutes of this order authorize the wearing of jeweled insignia with the permission of the emperor there are no known authorized examples of this insignia), the Military Merit Cross the Elisabeth Order and the Civil Merit Cross. In each case they were issued to indicate the special regard of the emperor.
- This decoration could only be conferred on officers
- The decoration was worn on the left side of the chest
- Prior to July 5, 1874 the crosses were to be returned to the War Ministry and later to the Privy Treasurer upon the death of the recipient. After July 5, 1874 the recipient's family was allowed to keep the decoration.
- Recipients were allowed to add recipient of the "MVK" to their names or if received with war decoration then they could add recipient of the "MVK mit Kriegsdekoration"





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Second Issue, 1860-1914

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Hallmarks: Hallmarks were introduced in 1872 and are found on these awards thereafter

- Makers marks for Rothe and Neffe, Alexander E. Kochert, Heinrich Ulbricht's Witwe and Vincent Mayer and sons
- 1872-1922 800 silver small article hallmark
- 1890-1921 Vienna Assay Office mark

Design: A clawed cross suspended from a flat rectangular ornamental eye with a notched suspension ring

Obverse: A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat suspension eye which has a suspension ring passing through it. The ring is notched in the center. The arms of the cross have a 2 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The 12-13 mm center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is a white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in silver. The crosses awarded for combat have a matt green alloy or gold gilt laurel wreath passing between the arms

Reverse: Plain white enameled



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Second Issue, 1860-1914

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Type II cross

Weight:

- 12 grams without war decoration
- 14.4 grams with the war decoration
- Jeweled examples weighed approximately 17.5 grams

Size: The cross is 31 mm in diameter. The arms of the cross are 15 mm in width at the end. The center medallion is 13 mm in diameter.

Type of Material:

- Silver and enamel
- Silver, enamel and Jewels

Variations:

- Type I: A cross as described above.
- Type II: A cross similar to the 1848 version with a wreath added between the arms (this is a privately produced decoration)
- Type III, Post 1870: A cross similar to the 1860 version with a white enameled center medallion. The lettering of the center medallion in this type of the award is not raised or separately applied. This type cross also has a white enameled flat reverse. This cross may also have the war decoration in the form of a wreath between the arms of the cross





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Second Issue, 1860-1914

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Type III cross and Type III cross with war decoration

Variations continued:

Type IV: As described above except this cross has an inscription on a plain silver reverse. These crosses are made to be presentation pieces. The inscriptions are privately added.

Type V: As described above except this cross has an inscription on the plain silver reverse of the arms and also has a white enameled center medallion. These crosses are made to be presentation pieces. The inscriptions are privately added.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Second Issue, 1860-1914

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Variations continued:

Type V: As described above except in gold and is jeweled with diamonds and rubies and a white enameled reverse with the award date inscribed on the top and bottom arms and the emperors monogram on the reverse center medallion





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Second Issue, 1860-1914

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Recipients of the awards in diamonds are as follows:

Cross with war decoration:

- General of Cavalry Archduke Joseph - 1898
- General of Cavalry Johann Freiherr von Appel - 1898
- General of Cavalry Ludwig Prinz zu Windischgratz - 1898
- General of Infantry Friedrich Graf Beck - 1898
- General of Infantry Wilhelm Freiherr von Reinlander - 1898
- General of Infantry Johann Freiherr von Waldstätten - 1898
- General of Infantry Zeno Graf Welsersheimb - 1898
- Feldzeugmeister Rudolf Prinz von Lobkowitz - 1905
- General of Infantry Eugen Freiherr von Albori - 1907
- General of Infantry Arthur Freiherr von Bolfras - 1908
- General of Infantry Remus von Woyrsch (Prussia) - 1914



Cross without war decoration:

- Archduke Rainer - 1898
- Archduke Friedrich - 1898
- Feldzeugmeister Philip Graf Grunne - 1898
- General of Infantry Geza Freiherr Fejervary de Komlos-Keresztes - 1898
- General of Infantry Anton Galgotzy - 1898
- Archduke Franz Ferdinand - 1908
- Archduke Eugen - 1908
- Admiral Rudolf Graf Montecuccoli - 1909
- General of Cavalry Alexander Graf Uxkull-Gyllenband - 1914



Designer: The jeweled versions were made by A.E. Kochert and by Rothe and Neffe.

Manufacturer:

- F. Rothe, Rothe and Neffe
- Alexander E. Kochert
- Vincent Mayer and Sons

Number Issued: 3,560 awards of this cross were issued between 1860 and 1899. 1,527 were issued for combatant service which was recognized with the addition of a war decoration 2,033 crosses were issued for non-combatant service and thus without war decoration. 63 awards were made to foreigners.

1860 = 33 crosses were issued (29 with war decoration)

1861 = 4 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration

1862 = 6 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration

1863 = 4 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration

1864 = 97 crosses were issued (86 with war decoration, 3 without war decoration and 7 to foreigners). This is the year of the Second Schleswig War

1865 = 8 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration

1866 = 1,049 crosses were issued (940 with war decoration, 17 without war decoration and 54 to foreigners)

(Note this is the year of the Austro-Prussian War)

1867 = 14 crosses were issued (11 with war decoration)

1868 = 7 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration

1869 = 3 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration

1870 = 46 crosses were issued (6 with war decoration)

1871 = 7 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration

1872 = 12 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Second Issue, 1860-1914

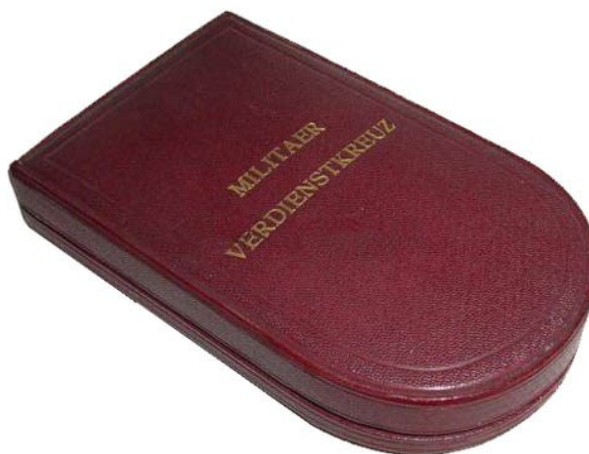
(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Number Issued (Continued):

1873=7 crosses were issued none of which had the war decoration
1874 = 21 crosses were issued (3 with war decoration and 2 to foreigners)
1875 = 9 crosses were issued without war decoration
1876 = 27 crosses were issued without war decoration
1877 = 45 crosses were issued without war decoration
1878 = 431 crosses were issued (382 with war decoration) (year of the Balkan Conflict)
1879 = 56 crosses were issued (7 with war decoration)
1880 = 77 crosses were issued without war decoration
1881 = 68 crosses were issued without war decoration
1882 = 98 crosses were issued (63 with war decoration)
1883 = 68 crosses were issued without war decoration
1884 = 53 crosses were issued without war decoration
1885 = 86 crosses were issued without war decoration
1886 = 68 crosses were issued without war decoration
1887 = 64 crosses were issued without war decoration
1888 = 73 crosses were issued without war decoration
1889 = 77 crosses were issued without war decoration
1890 = 83 crosses were issued without war decoration
1891 = 88 crosses were issued without war decoration
1892 = 98 crosses were issued without war decoration
1893 = 66 crosses were issued without war decoration
1894 = 68 crosses were issued without war decoration
1895 = 92 crosses were issued without war decoration
1896 = 64 crosses were issued without war decoration
1897 = 56 crosses were issued without war decoration
1898 = 261 crosses were issued without war decoration, (50 year reign jubilee year)
1899 = 66 crosses were issued without war decoration
1905 = 174 crosses were issued without war decoration
1906 = 183 crosses were issued without war decoration
1908 = 426 crosses were issued without war decoration
1909 = 356 crosses were issued without war decoration
1910 = 358 crosses were issued without war decoration

Order of Precedence: When established it was the highest ranking award other than order. Not listed in the 1918 Order of Precedence

Case: There were numerous variants on the cases for this decoration. Cases are known to have been made by Rothe and Neffe, Alexander Kochert, Vincent Mayer and Sons, Moritz Tiller & Co. The example illustrated to the right has a red leather cover with gilt inscription: **MILITAER VERDIENSTKREUZ** (Military Merit Cross) in gold on the lid. The inside of the lid is white silk and often has the maker's logo in gold on it. The liner of the bottom of the case is dark blue or black velvet and is fitted.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Second Issue, 1860-1914

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Case Continued: A presentation case with a dedication on the top of the lid. The inside of the lid is white silk which often has the maker's logo. The bottom interior is black or royal blue velvet and fitted.



Ribbon: A 40 mm wide crimson and white-laddered war ribbon worn as a straight ribbon until circa 1865 and thereafter on a tri-fold ribbon.

Attachments: None

Miniature: Miniatures of this award exist





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Second Issue, 1860-1914
(Militärverdienstkreuz)

779.

Von Seiner
kaiserlichen und königlichen Apostolischen Majestät
Oberstkämmerer

An den Herrn

k. und k. Oberstleutnant Alfred Krauss.

Seine kaiserliche und königliche Apostolische Majestät
haben Sich mit Allerhöchster Entschliessung
vom 2. April 1904. ... benogen gefunden Ihnen das
Militär-Verdienstkreuz
huldreichst zu verleihen.

Demgemäß wird Ihnen in den Anlagen die entsprechende
Dekoration und ein Exemplar der Statuten übermittelt.

Seiner k. und k. Apost. Majestät wickl. geheimer Rat
und Oberstkämmerer

Karl Graf von Ledebur: Präses

Vom Oberstkämmereramte
Wien, am 6. April 1904.
Karl J. J. J.
k. u. k. Hofrat

Military Merit Cross certificate issued in 1904





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Second Issue, 1860-1914
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Feldmarschalleutnant Otto Freiherr von Hartlieb wearing the Military Merit Cross





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Second Issue, 1860-1914
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Feldzeugmeister Vincenz Freiherr von Able
Wearing the Military Merit Cross with war decoration





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Date Issued: September 23, 1914-1918

Reason Issued: To recognize officers of the Austrian armed forces who have accomplished especially meritorious services during time of war by high intelligence, courage and resoluteness, or in time of piece, by outstanding zeal.

Classes or Types: This decoration was issued in three classes which comprised 21 variations with and without war decoration and with and without swords. The addition of the swords was authorized on December 13, 1916. Sixteen of the possible variations of this award were issued during World War I
(**Note: Insignia descriptions in bold are the awards that were issued.**)

Military Merit Cross First class

- **Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration first class and swords first class (December, 14 1916-1918)**
- **Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration first class and swords of a lower class (February, 17 1918– November 11, 1918)**
- Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration second class and swords of a lower class (February, 17 1918– November 11, 1918)
- Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration third class and swords of a lower class (February, 17 1918– November 11, 1918)
- **Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration first class (September 23, 1914-1918)**
- Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration second class (September 23, 1914-1918)
- Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration third class (September 23, 1914-1918)
- Military Merit Cross First Class (September 23, 1914-1918)

Military Merit Cross second class

- **Military Merit Cross Second Class with war decoration second class and swords second class (December, 14 1916-1918)**
- **Military Merit Cross Second Class with war decoration second class and swords third class (February, 17 1918– November 11, 1918)**
- Military Merit Cross Second Class with war decoration third class and swords third class (February, 17 1918 – November 11, 1918)
- **Military Merit Cross Second Class with second award of the war decoration second class and swords second class (Authorized March 14, 1918)**
- **Military Merit Cross Second Class with second award of the war decoration second class and swords third class (Authorized March 14, 1918)**





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

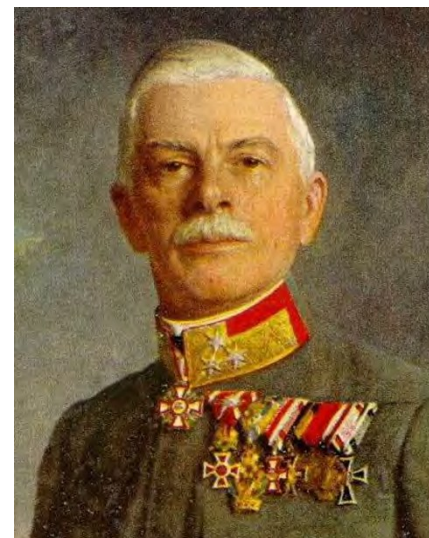


Military Merit Cross second class (Continued)

- Military Merit Cross Second Class with second award of the war decoration second class (Authorized March 14, 1918)
- Military Merit Cross Second Class with war decoration second class (October 11, 1914-1918)
- Military Merit Cross Second Class with war decoration third class (October 11, 1914-1918)
- Military Merit Cross Second Class (October 11, 1914-1918)

Military Merit Cross third Class

- Military Merit Cross third Class with war decoration and swords and third award bar (Authorized March 14, 1918)
- Military Merit Cross third Class with war decoration and swords and second award bar (Authorized March 14, 1918)
- Military Merit Cross third Class with war decoration and swords (Authorized December, 14 1916-1918)
- Military Merit Cross third Class with war decoration and third award bar (Authorized March 14, 1918)
- Military Merit Cross third Class with war decoration and second award bar (Authorized March 14, 1918)
- Military Merit Cross third Class with war decoration (March 12, 1860-1918)
- Military Merit Cross third class, (October 22, 1849-1918) (crosses awarded without war decoration prior to the war could be worn with the first or second class awards with war decoration issued during the war. (See picture of General der Infanterie Stoger-Steiner to the right)





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Interesting Facts:

- This cross was originally proposed by Field Marshall Josef Count Radetzky as an award for the officers who served with him at Custozza and Novara in 1848 and 1849. After 1860 it was awarded for heroism in battle and for long and meritorious service. Most officers received the third class of the award after 20 years of service and after attaining the rank of Major. This varied however depending on the status of the recipient and the nature of their service with some receiving the award after only 15 years of service.
- The enamel in this issue is a darker shade of red than in those issued before 1914
- The wreath is rounder and more well defined than those issued prior to 1914
- The crosses are thicker than those made before 1914
- This cross was awarded with jewels. Jeweled examples of this decoration are not a higher award but were purchased and presented by the emperor Franz Joseph as a personal sign of his appreciation for the services rendered by the recipient who already possessed the decoration. The original intention was to honor individuals close to Kaiser at the time of Jubilees and other ceremonial occasions.
- There were only eight Austro-Hungarian awards authorized by statute to be issued in a jeweled version: The Order of the Golden Fleece, The Military Order of Maria Theresia, The Order of St. Stephan, the Order of Leopold, The Austrian Imperial Order of the Iron Crown, (although the statutes of this order authorize the wearing of jeweled insignia with the permission of the emperor there are no known authorized examples of this insignia), the Military Merit Cross the Elisabeth Order and the Civil Merit Cross. In each case they were issued to indicate the special regard of the emperor.
- This decoration could only be conferred on officers in the 2nd class to Brigade and Division commanders and the third class to the rank of Oberst and below.
- The recipients family were allowed to keep the decoration after the recipients death.
- The Third class cross was often awarded posthumously
- Some notable recipients were: Archduke Friedrich, Sultan Mohammed V, Generalfeldmarschall Prinz Leopold of Bavaria, Generaloberst Eduard Graf Paar
- The 1st class cross was awarded only to members of the house of Hapsburg and general officers commanding Armies or larger units
- The smaller badges of this decoration which were authorized on April 23, 1918 were privately purchased by the recipients of the decoration and not issued by the Austro-Hungarian government.
- Although the cross was originally intended for officers in the Austro-Hungarian armed forces, it was, during the period, when it was issued in three classes, also awarded to officers and military leaders of the Central Powers allies.
- There were 26 variations of this award of which 18 were issued during WWI
- The first recipient of the Military Merit Cross second class was Lieutenant General Ignaz Trollman Freiherr von Lovenberg who received the second class with war decoration on November 29, 1914.
- Archduke Eugen was one of two persons to receive this award twice in diamonds. He received the third class in 1908 and the first class with war decoration and swords in 1917. Archduke Friedrich received the third class in 1898 and the first class with war decoration and swords in 1915.
- After November 17, 1914 the statutes of the Military Merit Cross allowed those who had received the 3rd class cross with war decoration and the cross without war decoration to wear both decorations





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Hallmarks:

Hallmarks on the first class badges: (Often found on the hinge)

- The makers logo of Rudolf Marschall
- The mark of CF Rothe
- 1872-1922 800 fine silver hallmark
- 1890-1921 Vienna Assay Office mark

Hallmarks on the Second class decorations

- The makers mark of Rudolf Marschall
- The makers mark of Rudolf Souval
- 1872-1922 800 silver small article hallmark
- 1890-1921 Vienna Assay Office mark

Hallmarks on the third class decorations

- Makers marks for Rothe and Neffe, Alexander E. Kochert, The brothers Resch and Vincent Mayer and sons
- 1872-1922 800 silver small article hallmark
- 1890-1921 Vienna Assay Office mark

Design: A red and white enameled clawed cross

Obverse: Only badges that were issued will be described

- **Military Merit Cross First class with war decoration and swords (December, 13 1916-1918):** A clawed cross, the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The arms of the cross have a 3.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The 27 mm center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is a white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The crosses awarded for bravery have a green enameled laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross and **gold** upward pointing swords passing through the center medallion and above the wreath





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



- **Military Merit Cross First class with war decoration, and swords of a lower class (December, 13 1916-1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The arms of the cross have a 3.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The 27 mm center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is a white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The crosses awarded for combatant service have a green enameled laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross. Those awarded to persons who had previously been decorated with the Military Merit Cross second or third class for bravery have oxidized **silver** upward pointing swords passing through the center medallion and above the wreath.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Image courtesy of Dorotheum



Obverse (continued):

- **Military Merit Cross First class with war decoration (September 23, 1914-1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The arms of the cross have a 3.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is a white enameled center medallion. On the 27 mm center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The crosses awarded for war service have a green enameled laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross.
- **Military Merit Cross Second class with war decoration second class, and swords second class (December, 13 1916-1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat stylized wedge shaped rectangular eye with a double grooved suspension ring passing through it. The arms of the cross have a 2.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is an 18mm white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The crosses awarded for bravery have a 6 mm wide green enameled laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross and **gold** upward pointing swords passing through the center medallion and over the wreath.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Obverse Continued:

- **Military Merit Cross Second class with war decoration second class, and swords third class (December, 13 1916-1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat stylized wedge shaped rectangular eye with a double grooved suspension ring passing through it. The arms of the cross have a 2.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is an 18mm white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The crosses which are awarded for war merit and which recognize the award of the third class for bravery have a 6 mm wide green enameled laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross and oxidized **silver** upward pointing swords passing through the center medallion and over the wreath.
- **Military Merit Cross Second Class with the second award of the war decoration second class, and swords (Authorized February 8, 1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat stylized wedge shaped rectangular eye with a double grooved suspension ring passing through it. Soldered to the top of the suspension ring is an 18 – 20 mm in diameter green enameled laurel wreath. The arms of the cross have a 2.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is an 18mm white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The crosses awarded for bravery have a 6 mm wide green enameled laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross and **gold** or **oxidized silver** upward pointing swords passing through the center medallion and over the wreath. (Gold swords denote swords second class and oxidized silver, swords third class.



Image attributed to Vaclav Mericka, Orden
Und Ehrenzeichen, Anton Schroll & Co





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Obverse Continued:

- **Military Merit Cross Second Class with second award of the war decoration second class (Authorized February 8, 1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat stylized wedge shaped rectangular eye with a double grooved suspension ring passing through it. Soldered to the top of the suspension ring is an 18-20 mm in diameter green enameled laurel wreath. The arms of the cross have a 2.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is an 18mm white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The crosses awarded for war service have a 6 mm wide green enameled laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross
- **Military Merit Cross Second Class with war decoration second class (September 23, 1914-1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat stylized wedge shaped rectangular eye with a double grooved suspension ring passing through it. The arms of the cross have a 2.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is an 18mm white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The crosses awarded for war service have a 6 mm wide green enameled laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross.



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Obverse Continued:

- **Military Merit Cross Second Class with war decoration third class (September 23, 1914-1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat stylized wedge shaped rectangular eye with a double grooved suspension ring passing through it. The arms of the cross have a 2.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is an 18mm white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. The second class crosses which denote the award of the cross in the third class for military merit have a matt gold gilt wreath tightly rapped around the center medallion. Only one officer was eligible for this award: Karl Adler von Strasser who is not known to have worn it
- **Military Merit Cross Second Class:** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat stylized wedge shaped eye with a suspension ring passing through it. The arms of the cross have a 2.5 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is an 18mm white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in gilt silver. This cross was only issued once to Karl Adler von Strasser



Lieutenant General Karl Adler von Strasser The sole recipient of the Military Merit Cross, second class and only person entitled to wear the second class with war decoration third class





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

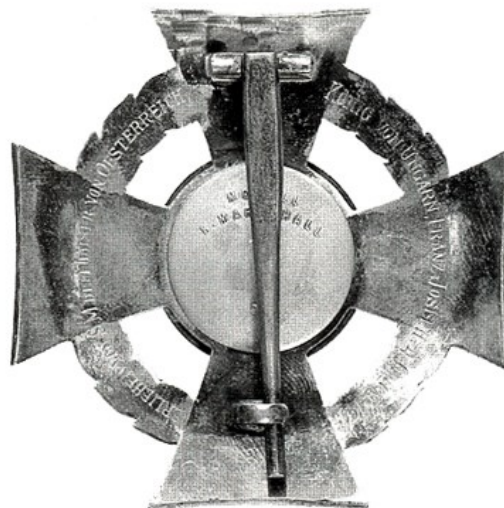
Obverse Continued:

- **Military Merit Cross Third Class with war decoration (September 23, 1914-1918):** A clawed cross the arms of which are slightly curved and taper towards the center medallion. The upper arm has a flat stylizes wedge shaped eye with a grooved suspension ring passing through it. The arms of the cross have a 2 mm garnet-red enameled border. Inside of the border is a white enameled field. The center medallion also has a garnet-red enameled border inside of which is a 13 mm white enameled center medallion. On the center medallion in two lines is the inscription **VER DIENST** (For Merit) in silver. The crosses awarded for military service have a 3 mm wide gold gilt laurel wreath passing between the arms of the cross. (To view the Military Merit Cross with war decoration and swords see attachments below)



Reverse:

- **Military Merit Cross first class (September 23, 1914-1918):** A plain silver reverse with a sturdy horizontal pin for attaching the badge to the uniform. The reverse of the war wreath and swords when present are also plain silver. The center medallion of the badge often has the word **MODEL** and the name of the medalist **R. MARSHALL** (Rudolf Marshall). The illustrated reverse is of a cross that was also a presentation piece and thus is inscribed on the reverse of the wreath which would not be found on the non-presentation crosses.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

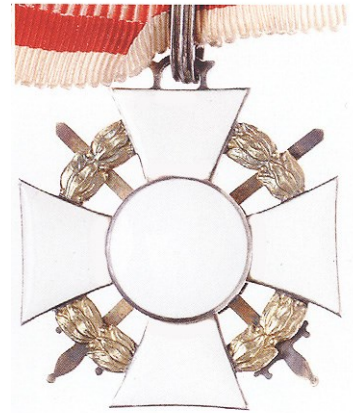
Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

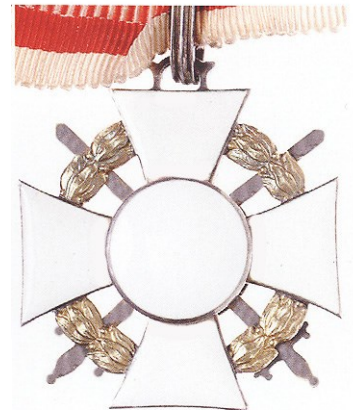
Reverse:

- **Military Merit Cross second class with war decoration second class and swords second class (December 13, 1916-1918):** badges have a plain white enameled reverse with the attached wreath enameled or in the same metal as the obverse and the reverse of the swords in metal

Image courtesy of Dorotheum



- **Military Merit Cross second class with war decoration second class and swords third class (December 13, 1916-1918):** badges have a plain white enameled reverse with the attached wreath enameled or in the same metal as the obverse and the reverse of the swords in metal



- **Military Merit Cross second class with second award of the war decoration second class and swords second class (September 23, 1914-1918):** badges have a plain white enameled reverse with the attached wreath enameled or in the same metal as the obverse and the reverse of the swords in metal. Above the cross is a second wreath in green enamel.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Reverse:

- **Military Merit Cross second class with second award of the war decoration second class and swords second class (September 23, 1914-1918):** badges have a plain white enameled reverse with the attached wreath enameled or in the same metal as the obverse and the reverse of the swords in metal. Above the cross is a second wreath in green enamel.



- **Military Merit Cross second class with second award of the war decoration second class (September 23, 1914-1918):** badges have a plain white enameled reverse with the attached wreath enameled or in the same metal as the obverse. Above the cross is a second wreath in green enamel.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Reverse:

- **Military Merit Cross second class with war decoration second class (September 23, 1914-1918) and war decoration third class (1860-1918):** badges have a plain white enameled reverse with the attached wreath enameled or in the same metal as the obverse
- **Military Merit Cross second class (September 23, 1914-1918) and third class (1860-1918):** badges have a plain white enameled reverse with the attached wreath enameled or in the same metal as the obverse



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Weight:

- Military Merit Cross first class with war decoration and swords: 85.2 grams
- Military Merit Cross first class with war decoration: 68.1 -78.8 grams
- Military Merit Cross second class with second award of the war decoration and swords: 39.8 grams
- Military Merit Cross second class with war decoration and swords: 35 grams
- Military Merit Cross second class with second award of the war decoration: 38.8 grams
- Military Merit Cross second class with war decoration: 34 grams
- Military Merit Cross second class with war decoration third class: 34 grams
- Military Merit Cross second class: 29.4 grams
- Military Merit Cross third class with war decoration: 14.4 grams
- Military Merit Cross jeweled third class badges: 17.6 grams

Size:

- Military Merit Cross first class badges: 61-62 mm in diameter with arms that taper to 27 mm at the ends and a center medallion that is 27 mm in diameter
- Military Merit Cross second class badges: 39-40 mm in diameter with a 19 mm center medallion
- Military Merit Cross second class with second award of the war decoration: 70 mm in height and 40-41 mm in width with a 18-19 mm center medallion
- Military Merit Cross third class Badge: 31 mm in diameter. The arms of the cross are 15 mm in width at the end. The center medallion is 13 mm in diameter.

Type of Material:

- All classes: Silver and enamel
- First and third class: Silver, jewels and enamel
- Silver plated bronze

Variations:

- Type I, all classes: A cross as described above.
- Type II, all classes: As described above except it has an inscription on the back. These are presentation pieces. The inscriptions are privately added.

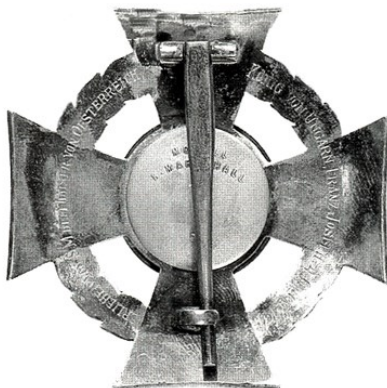


Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

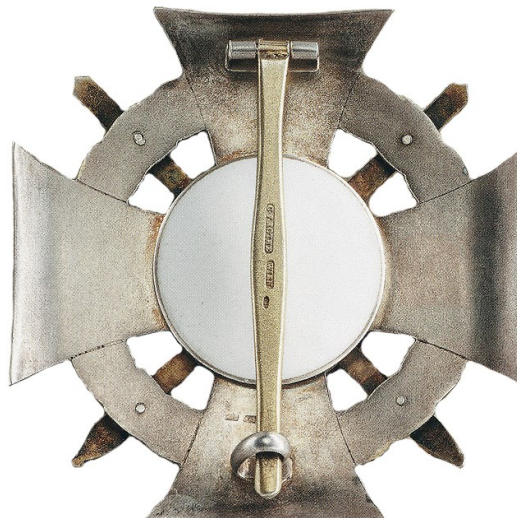
Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

- First class, Type III: as described above but with jeweled obverse
- First class, Type IV: as described above but with a white enameled, reverse center medallion





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Variations continued:

- Third class, Type III: As described above except in gold and jeweled with diamonds and rubies and a white enameled reverse with the award date inscribed on the top and bottom arm and Franz Joseph's monogram on the center medallion in gold. These were awarded in 1898 as part of the jubilee calibration.



Image attributed to Kituntetese, Agnes Makai & Vera Heri, Kiado Zrinyi

- Type IV, second and third class: The same as Type I except the obverse inscription **VER DIENST** is an integral part of the obverse center medallion and not applied





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Designer: The first and second class badges were designed by Rudolf Marschall

Manufacturer:

- **First class badges in diamonds**
 - Rudolf Marshall
 - Alexander E. Kochert
- **First class badges**
 - Rudolf Marshall
 - Rudolf Souval
 - Alexander E. Kochert
- **Second Class Badges**
 - Rudolf Marshall
 - Rudolf Souval
- **Third class badges in diamonds**
 - Rothe and Neffe
 - Alexander E. Kochert
- **Third class badges**
 - Rothe and Neffe
 - Alexander E. Kochert
 - Vincent Mayer and Sons
 - George Adam Scheid
 - Bruder Schneider
 - Rudolf Souval
 - Anton Reitterer
 - Gebrüder Resch

Note: It has been credibly reported that the Austrian makers of orders and medals C.F Rothe & Neffe of Vienna produced the Military Merit Crosses illustrated in the Ordensbuch der Gewesenen Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie in 1918/19 by Heinrich F. Michetschläger

Number Issued:

- In World War I There were issued:
 - ◊ First Class Badges = 112 (78 to Austrians, 34 to foreigners), 9 were in diamonds
 - ◊ Second Class Badges = 7 are known (6 with war decoration)
 - ◊ Third Class Badges = Unknown
- A total of six jeweled first class badges with war decoration and three jeweled first class badges with war decoration and swords were issued from 1914 to 1918
- No jeweled second class badges were issued
- A total of 4 jeweled third class badges were issued from 1914-1918. (3 with war decoration)

Order of Precedence:

- Military Merit Cross, first class, Number 4, coming after the Order of St. Stephan, grand cross and before the Order of Leopold, grand cross
 - Military Merit Cross, second class, Number 11, coming after the Order of St. Stephan, commander and before the Order of Leopold, commander
 - Military Merit Cross, third class, Number 27, coming after the Officer Silver Bravery Medal and before the Red Cross Honor Insignia, first class





Decorations

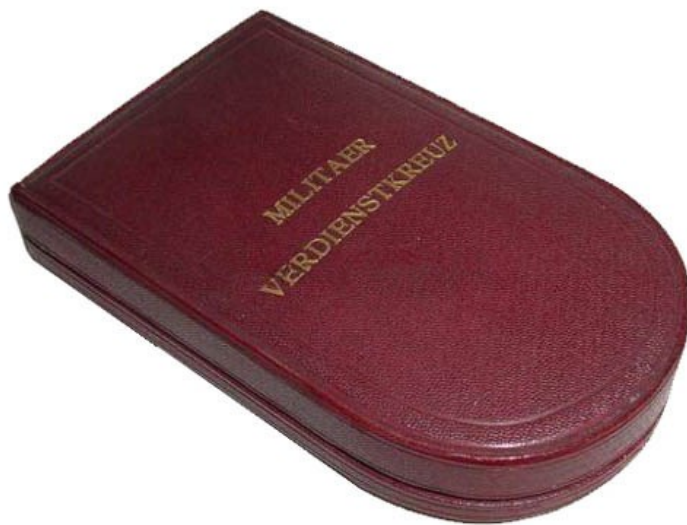
Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Case: There were numerous variants on the cases for this decoration. Cases are known to have been made by Rothe and Neffe, Alexander .E. Kochert, Vincent Mayer and Sons, Moritz Tiller & Co. There are also cases with presentation inscriptions engraved upon them.

- Type I: has a red leather cover with a gilt inscription: **MILITAER VERDIENSTKREUZ** (Military Merit Cross) in gold on the lid. The inside of the lid is white silk and often has the maker's logo in gold on it. The liner of the bottom of the case is in dark blue or black velvet and is fitted.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

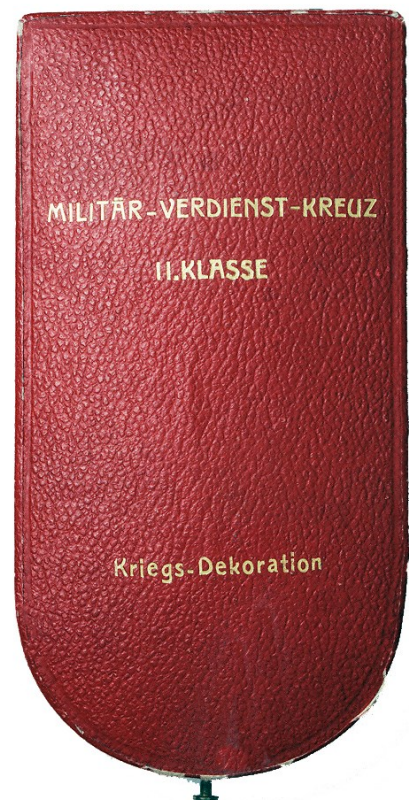
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Case:

- Type II: has a green leather cover with gold decorations and the words **MILITÄR VERDIENSTKREUZ** (Military Merit Cross) and a representation of the type of the award (war wreath, war wreath and swords). The inner liner of the lid is white silk and often has the manufacturer's logo in gold. This case was also used for jeweled awards. (This type case is known to have been used by

- Type III: A simulated red leather case with gold inscription on the exterior of the lid. The interior of the lid is white satin and sometimes has the maker's logo. The bottom interior of the case is fitted in white, maroon or black fitted plush.



Rothe)



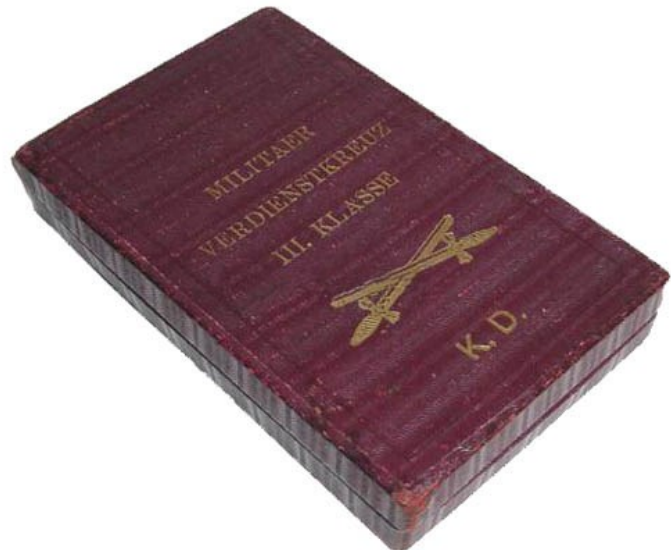


Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Case:

- Type IV: A square simulated leather maroon case with gold inscription and decoration on the exterior of the lid. The interior of the lid and the bottom of the case is white paper and is fitted to accommodate the decoration



Type V: A presentation case. The bottom is the same as the Type I case but the lid is smooth leather on which is a presentation inscription



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)

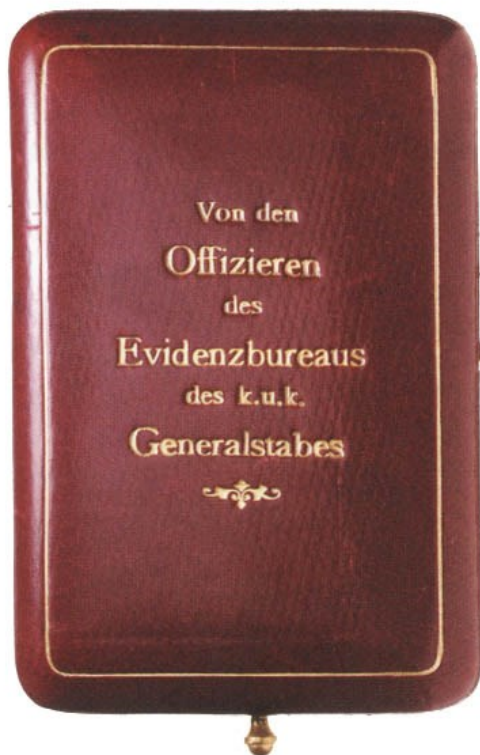


Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Case:

- Type VI: (special presentation): A rectangular leather maroon case with gold inscription and decoration on the exterior of the lid.
- Type VII: Same as Type III except square and with an inscription appropriate to the first class award it contains

Images courtesy of Dorotheum





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Ribbon: A 40 mm wide Ponceau (Poppy) red and white-laddered war ribbon with a 20 mm laddered center section and 5 mm red and white side stripes worn as a tri-fold ribbon for the third class or as a neck ribbon for the second class. After October 27, 1917 a small rectangular ribbon for this decoration was issued which sometimes had small attachments to indicate specific classes of the award or that it had been issued with swords. There were no multiple award attachments for this ribbon.

Attachments:

- **Ribbon attachments:** When the rectangular chest ribbons were introduced on October 27, 1917, small attachments (19 mm for the 1st class, 12x18 for the second class, 12 x26 for the second class with second war decoration) were also introduced to differentiate the various classes and grades of the Military Merit Cross. These attachments consist of small replicas of the first and second class crosses which were attached to the ribbon. In addition crossed gilt swords were introduced to identify third class decorations issued with swords.





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Attachments continued:

- Kleiner badges: Kleiner badges were introduced on April 23, 1918 to be worn when it was inconvenient to wear the full size first or second class Military Merit Crosses.
- The kleiner badge for the Military Merit Cross, first class consists of a 19 mm replica of the first class cross attached to the ribbon of the third class cross with war decoration to denote the wearer was entitled to the higher award. The 19 mm representation of the first class cross would be appropriate to the type received i.e. Cross with war decoration first class and swords first class, cross with war decoration first class and swords of a lower class, cross with war decoration etc.
- The kleiner badge for the Military Merit Cross, second class consists of a 12x18 mm replica of the second class cross or a 12x 26 mm replica of the second class cross with second war decoration attached to the ribbon of the third class cross with war decoration to denote the wearer was entitled to the higher award. The representation of the second class cross would be appropriate to the type received i.e. Cross with war decoration second class and swords second class, cross with war decoration second class and swords third class, cross with war decoration etc.



Kleiner of the Military Merit Cross, first class with war decoration and swords



Kleiner of the Military Merit Cross, first class with war decoration, and swords of a lower class



Image attributed to Reference Catalogue Orders, medals and decorations of the World, A-D, Borna Barac





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



**Kleiner of the Military Merit
Cross, first class with war
decoration**



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

**Kleiner of the Military Merit
Cross, second class with war
decoration, and swords**



**Kleiner of the Military Merit
Cross, second class with war dec-
oration, and swords third class**



**Kleiner of the Military Merit
Cross, second class with swords
and a second award of the war
decoration (February 8, 1918)**





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Kleiner of the Military Merit Cross, second class with second award of the war decoration (February 8, 1918)



Kleiner of the Military Merit Cross, second class with war decoration



Kleiner of the Military Merit Cross, second class with war decoration third class:



Kleiner of the Military Merit Cross, second class:





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Attachments continued: On February 8, 1918 multiple award bars were introduced for the Military Merit Cross third class. These gilded stainless steel trapezoid shaped bars designated a repeat award of the third class cross. Johann Zimmler of Vienna was the manufacturer of these bars which are engraved on the back with his logo.

- Third award: two bars: first bar is 50 mm in length at the top edge and the second bar is 40 mm in length (top edge) with both bars being 8 mm wide (Bars are spaced 20 mm apart). The top bar bears swords when appropriate
- Second award: a bar 50 mm in length (top edge) and 8 mm wide. The bar bears swords when appropriate

Note: Occasionally the bars are engraved with the recipient's name or with a salutation, although this was unofficial.

Military Merit Cross, third class with war decoration and swords and third award bar



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Military Merit Cross, third class with war decoration and swords, and second award bar



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Military Merit Cross, third class with war decoration and third award bar



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Attachments continued: Gilded bronze swords were introduced on December 13, 1916 for awards given for bravery.

Military Merit Cross, third class with war decoration and second award bar



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Miniature: Miniatures of this award exist

Military Merit Cross, third class with war decoration and swords



Image courtesy of Dorotheum



Image courtesy of Dorotheum





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Recipients of the awards in Diamonds are as follows:

Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration and swords:

- Archduke Eugen von Habsburg, 1917

Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration, and swords third class:

- Generaloberst Arthur Freiherr von Bolfras-September, 1918

Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration

- Feldmarschall Archduke Freidrich, May 1915
- Emperor Franz Joseph, 1915
- Generalfeldmarschall Prince Leopold of Bavaria, July 1917
- Generaloberst August von Macksensen, November, 1915
- Mohammed V, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, April 1917
- Generaloberst Eduard Graf Paar-September, 1917
- Generalfeldmarschall Paul von Hindenburg, November 1917

Military Merit Cross third class with war decoration:

- General der Kavallerie Archduke Josef, 1898
- General der Infanterie Eugen Freiherr von Albori, 1907
- General der Kavallerie Johann Freiherr von Appel, 1898
- General der Infanterie Friedrich Graf Beck, 1898
- Generalfeldmarschall Paul von Beneckendorf und von Hindenburg (Prussia)-1915
- General der Infanterie Arthur Freiherr von Bolfras, 1908
- Generaloberst Samuel Freiherr von Hazai-1918
- Generalfeldmarschall Paul von Hindenburg - November 1915
- General der Kavallerie Archduke Joseph Karl Ludwig, 1898
- Feldzeugmeister Rudolf Prinz von Lobkowitz, 1905
- General der Infanterie Wilhelm Freiherr von Reinländer, 1898
- General der Infanterie Johann Freiherr von Waldstätten, 1898
- General der Infanterie Zeno Graf Welsersheimb, 1898
- General der Kavallerie Ludwig Prinz zu Windisch-Graetz, 1898
- General of Infantry Remus von Woyrsch (Prussia)-1914

Military Merit Cross third class:

- General der Kavallerie Erzherzog Albrecht, 1856
- General der Kavallerie Erzherzog Eugen, 1908
- General der Infanterie Geza Freiherr Fejérváry de Komlós-Keresztes, 1898
- Feldzeugmeister Archduke Friedrich, 1898
- General der Kavallerie Archduke Franz Ferdinand, 1908
- General der Infanterie Anton Galgótzky, 1898
- Feldzeugmeister Philip Graf Grunne, 1898
- Admiral Rudolf Graf Montecuccoli, 1909
- Feldzeugmeister Archduke Rainer, 1898
- General der Kavallerie Alexander Graf Uxkull-Gyllenband– 1914
- Generaloberst Albrecht Duke of Wurttemberg-1915





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Recipients of the First Class with war decoration and swords:

- General of Infantry Arthur Arz von Straussenburg-1917
- Generaloberst Karl Freiherr von Kirchbach auf Lauterbach-1917
- General of Infantry Alfred Krauss-1918
- Generaloberst Karl Kritec-1917
- General of Infantry Erich Ludendorff (Germany)-1917
- Generaloberst Franz Freiherr Rohr von Denta –1917
- Generaloberst Stephan Freiherr Sarkotic von Lovcen-1918
- Generaloberst Wenzel von Worm-1917

Recipients of the First Class with war decoration:

- General of Cavalry Friedrich August Grand Duke of Oldenburg-1915
- Friedrich August III King of Saxony-1915
- General of Cavalry Friedrich von Barenhardi-1918
- General of Infantry Otto von Below (Prussia)-1915
- Generalfeldmarschall Paul von Beneckendorf und von Hindenburg-1917
- Generaloberst Bernhard Duke of Sachsen-Meiningen-1915
- General of Infantry Hans von Beseler-1915
- General of Cavalry Eduard Bohm-Ermolli-1915
- Generaloberst Arthur Freiherr von Bolfras-1916
- General of Infantry Svetozer Boroevic von Bojna-1915
- General of Infantry Felix Count of Bothmer-1915
- Admiral Eduard von Capelle-1917
- General of Cavalry Viktor Dankle-1915
- Generalfeldmarschall Hermann Von Eichhorn-1918
- General of Infantry Wilhelm Ernst Grand Duke of Saxony-1918
- Generaloberst Ludwig Freiherr von Falkenhausen-1918
- General of Infantry Erch von Falkenhayn (Germany)-1915
- Ferdinand I King of Bulgaria-1915
- General of Cavalry Friedrich Franz IV Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin-1915
- Eitel Friedrich Prince of Prussia-1917
- Generaloberst Friedrich II Grand Duke of Baden-1915
- General of Artillery Max von Gallwitz-1915
- General of Infantry Friedrich Freiherr von Georgi-1915
- General of Infantry Friedrich von Gerok-1917
- Generalfeldmarschall Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz (Germany)-1915
 - Generaloberst Archduke Eugen von Habsburg-1915
 - Feldmarschall Archduke Freidrich von Habsburg-1915
 - Emperor Franz Joseph von Habsburg-1915
 - General of Infantry Archduke Joseph Ferdinand von Habsburg-1915





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Recipients of the First Class Continued:

- General of Cavalry Archduke Joseph von Habsburg-1916
- Emperor Karl von Habsburg -1917
- Generaloberst Archduke Leopold Salvator von Habsburg-1916
- Admiral Anton Haus-1915
- General of Infantry Samuel Freiherr von Hazai-1915
- Grand Admiral Heinrich Prince of Prussia-1915
- General of Infantry Franz Freiherr Conrad von Hotzendorf-1914
- Admiral Henning von Holtzendorff-1917
- Generalmajor Nikolaus Jekow-1916
- General of Infantry Hermann von Kovess von Kovesshaza-1915
- Feldzeugmeister Alexander Ritter von Krobatin-1915
- Generalfeldmarschall Leopold Prince of Bavaria-1915
- Generaloberst Friedrich Leopold Prince of Prussia-1915
- General of Infantry Alexander von Linsingen-1915
- General of Infantry Ernst Ludwig Grand Duke of Hesse-1915
- Ludwig III, King of Bavaria-1915
- General of Infantry Moritz Freiherr von Lyncker (Germany)-1915
- Generaloberst August von Macksensen-1915
- Mohammed V Sultan of the Ottoman Empire-1917
- Admiral Georg von Muller (Germany)- 1915
- Generaloberst Eduard Count Paar-1916
- Emperor Karl I Djemal Pascha (Ottoman Empire)-1918
- Djemal Pascha (Ottoman Empire)-1918
- General Enver Pasha (Ottoman Empire)- 1915
- General Tevfik Pascha (Ottoman Empire)-1917
- Wehib Pascha (Ottoman Empire)-1918
- General of Cavalry Karl Freiherr von Pflanzer-Baltin-1916
- Generaloberst Hans von Plessen (Germany)-1915
- Feldzeugmeister Oskar Potiorek - 1914
- Generaloberst Rupprecht Crown Prince of Bavaria-1915
- Generaloberst Stephan Freiherr Sarkotic von Locen-1918
- General of Infantry Franz Freiherr von Soden-1918
- Admiral Guido von Usedom (Germany)-1915
- General of Infantry Wilhelm Crown Prince of the German Empire-1915
 - Wilhelm II King of Wurttemberg-1915
 - Generaloberst Remus von Woyrsch (Germany)-1914





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Recipients of the First Class Continued:

- Generaloberst Adolf Freiherr Rhemen zu Barenfeld-1918
- Generaloberst Franz Rohr-1917
- General of Cavalry Otto Liman von Sanders (Germany)-1916
- Generaloberst Karl Terstyanszky von Nadas-1916
- Grand Admiral von Tirpitz-1915
- General Wahideddin Effendi (Ottoman Empire)-1917
- Wilhelm II German Emperor and King of Prussia-1916
- Nikola Todorov Zhekov , Bulgarian War Minister

Some Notable third class recipients

- Fedor von Bock: German Generalfeldmarschall, 3rd Class with War Decoration, June 24 1914
- Gotthard Heinrici: German officer in World War I, general in World War II, 3rd Class with War Decoration.
- Miklós Horthy: Austro-Hungarian naval officer, later Regent of Hungary, 3rd Class with War Decoration
- Erich von Manstein: German officer in World War I, field marshal in World War II, 3rd Class with War Decoration, 1916
- Erwin Rommel: German officer in World War I, field marshal in World War II, 3rd Class with War Decoration and Swords
- Ferdinand Schörner: German officer in World War I, field marshal in World War II, 3rd Class with War Decoration, 1916
- Wilhelm Ritter von Thoma: German officer in World War I, general in World War II, 3rd Class with War Decoration, 1916
- Mustafa Kemal Atatürk: Ottoman colonel in World War I; later Marshal, President and founder of the Republic of Turkey, 3rd Class with War Decoration, 1916

Image attributed to Fotitudini Der Tapferkeit, G. Ludwigstorff, W.A. Schwarz, J.Stolzer



Fieldmarschall Svetozar Borovic von Bojna wearing the Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration and swords





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

Military Merit Cross First Class with War Decoration Certificate issued in 1915 to Feldmarschall Alexander Freiherr von Krobatin.







Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)

Nr. 3331

Von Seiner
kaiserlichen und königlich Apostolischen Majestät
Oberstkämmerer

An den Herrn

Generalmajor, Kdt. d. 36. IBrig.

J o h a n n R i t t e r v o n R o m e r

Seine kaiserliche und königlich Apostolische Majestät

haben Sich mit Allerhöchster Entschliessung

vom 30. August 1918 *besogen gefunden Ihnen das*

Militär-Verdienstkreuz II. Klasse

mit der Kriegsdcoration II. Klasse

mit Schwertern


huldreichst zu verleihen

Demgemäß wird Ihnen in den Anlagen die entsprechende

Decoration und ein Exemplar der Statuten übersandt

Seiner k. und k. Apostolischen Majestät Seiner Rat
und Oberstkämmerer

Leopold Graf Berchtold



Vom Oberstkämmereramt
Wien, am 3. September 1918.

Wilhelm Fr. v. Werners
Spezialsekretariat d. K. Hofkammer

Military Merit Cross Second Class with War Decoration and Swords Certificate Issued August 30, 1918 to Generalmajor Johann Ritter von Romer





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)

№ 1110

Von Seiner
kaiserlichen und königlich Apostolischen Majestät
Oberstkämmerer

An den Herrn

Oberleutnant in der Reserve des IR.13

J a k o b K r o u f a

Seine kaiserliche und königlich Apostolische Majestät

haben Sich mit Allerhöchster Entschliessung
vom 19. März 1916 *bewogen gefunden Ihnen das*
Militär-Verdienstkreuz III. Klasse
mit der Kriegsdécoration III. Klasse
huldreichst zu verleihen.

Demgemäß wird Ihnen in den Anlagen die entsprechende
Decoration und ein Exemplar der Statuten übermittelt

Seiner k. und k. Apostolischen Majestät Scheiner Rat
und Oberstkämmerer

K. Graf Lanckoroński.

Vom Oberstkämmereramte
Wien, am 22. März 1916.

Wilhelm Th. v. Wackerer
k. u. k. Sekretär des k. u. k. Hofes

**Military Merit Cross third Class with War Decoration Certificate issued March 19, 1915 to
Oberstleutnant in the Reserve Jakob Kroufa**





Decorations

Military Merit Cross

Third Issue, 1914-1918

(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

A bar with seven awards with the Military Merit Cross third class with war decoration and swords



Image courtesy of Dorotheum

A bar with eight awards with the Military Merit Cross third class with war decoration and swords





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Archduke Eugen
wearing the Jeweled Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration and swords





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Generaloberst Eduard Freiherr von Bohm-Ermolli
wearing the Military Merit Cross First Class with war decoration and swords





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



**Feldmarschall Alexander Freiherr von Krobatin wearing the Military Merit Cross First Class
with war decoration**





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Feldmarschalleutnant Johann Graf von Hernerstein
wearing the Military Merit Cross Second Class with war decoration and swords





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



**Vizeadmiral Karl Kailer von Kaltenfels wearing the Military Merit Cross Second Class
with war decoration**





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)

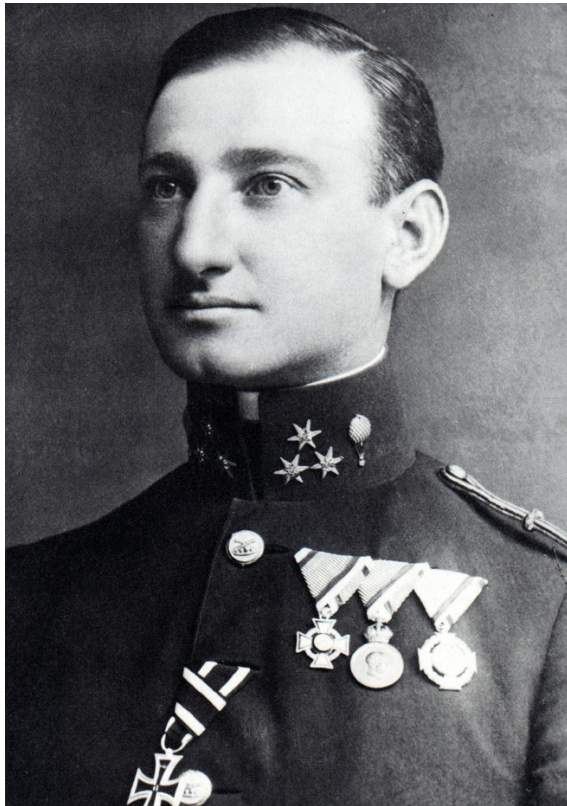


**Hauptman Josef Flicker, Commander of the 17th
Assault Battalion wearing the Military Merit Cross third
class with second award bar and war
decoration and swords**





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Military Merit Cross
Third Class with war decoration

General of Infantry Sandor Freiherr von Szurmay
Wearing the Military Merit Cross, third
class





Decorations
Military Merit Cross
Third Issue, 1914-1918
(Militärverdienstkreuz)



Feldmarschalleutnant Vladimir Laxa
Wearing the Military Merit Cross third class with war decoration and swords and the Military Merit cross third class

On November 16, 1914 a supplement to the statutes of the Military Merit Cross provided that officers who were awarded the cross without war decoration who had already received the award with war decoration were authorized to wear both. Thus we see in this picture Feldmarschalleutnant Laxa wearing two Military Merit Crosses third class, one with and one without war decoration

